

**THE FIVE HUNDRED SEVENTY-FIFTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF HEALTH OF BALTIMORE COUNTY
FRIDAY APRIL 26, 2024**

The Five Hundred Seventy-Fifth meeting of the Baltimore County Board of Health was held April 26 at 9:30 a.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Steve Adelsberger, Dr. Samuel Havrilak, Judy Kistner, Katie McElroy, Camille Smith and Winona Matthews

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Della Leister; Interim Health Officer and Secretary to the Board, Dr. Sohail Qarni; Acting Deputy Health Officer, Dr. Alexander Chen; Division Chief, Communicable Disease, Renee Youngfellow; Chief, Quality Improvement, and Christina Bergman, Office Administrator.

I. READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

To approve the minutes of March 22, 2024

Motion: Ms. Kistner
Second: Mr. Adelsberger
Decision: Unanimous approval.

II. AVIAN FLU AND TUBERCULOSIS UPDATES

Dr. Alexander Chen provided an update on Avian Flu and Tuberculosis to the Board (see attached Power Point).

AVIAN FLU

Higher cases of Avian Flu were being reported in farm animals in February. Milk is safe to drink from cow herds that have been affected if it has been pasteurized. The risk to humans for transmission is low. As of today, Communicable Disease has not received calls regarding the safety of consuming milk.

TUBERCULOSIS

Cases in the United States reached a ten year high in 2023 with delayed detection during the pandemic. Several vaccines have reached phase III of clinical trials. Baltimore County sees an estimated 25 cases annually. The department has had eleven cases to date for this year. The Department of Health receives Tuberculosis referrals from hospital physicians. Hospitalized patients receive two weeks of medical treatment. After the patient is discharged, local jurisdictions can continue their treatment. The National Alliance on Tuberculosis will be releasing new guidelines in the near future.

III. PUBLIC HEALTH ACCREDITATION

Ms. Youngfellow reported feedback has not yet been received from the accreditation board on the PHAB accreditation report submitted last month.

We are interviewing for an Equity and LGBTQ liaison. Second interviews are being scheduled.

IV. DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATION BY THE SECRETARY

Francis Scott Key Bridge Collapse

Baltimore County (BCCRS) Crisis Response Services were deployed on March 26 when the bridge collapsed. They were stationed in a staging area for the week to assist family members impacted by the disaster. Crisis Response is a program with health, police and the vendor Affiliated Sante. We participated in meetings with the County Executive and Emergency Management. Six families lost a loved one. These families, who primarily spoke Spanish, needed assistance. The Esperanza Center is now handling case coordination for these families. The Department of Social Services is assisting the economic recovery.

Centennial Celebration

We are partnering with organizations in the community as part of our centennial celebration. May 15 is the first scheduled event and will be held in Cockeysville. The topic will be services for uninsured/under insured and food security. The outreach team will be on site to provide resource information on services the health department provides. Future events will be held at Woodlawn with the topic being on health disparities with African Americans and Lansdowne where the topic will be services to undocumented individuals.

A staff event to celebrate the centennial will be held in October for half a day. The event will have a keynote speaker and will view our new video, *The Face of Public Health in Baltimore County*. The current video is very dated; we want to update it to show the department's work in the County. At the meeting, staff will have time to review the archives and reminisce.

COVID

COVID numbers are declining. We are working with Property Management at the Eastern Family Resource Center to make an isolation area for any type of communicable disease. This is to allow partial use of the third floor for those seeking shelter. . The area we have been using for isolation purposes is larger than needed.

Program Updates:

- The Mobile Unit is out and about in the community.
- Animal Services – BCAS held a pet adoption event with the Oriole Bird ahead of opening day.
- Public rabies clinics are starting in the community. The schedule is posted on our website.
- There are two consultants working with HHS. The first consultant is reviewing Animal Services with the focus on four specific areas:
 - Administrative holds/retention of animals
 - Evaluation of location
 - Evaluation of our fees
 - Evaluation of the role of the animal services commission

The second consultant is working with the Bureau of Behavioral Health in evaluating a Crisis Stabilization Center for the County.

- We are in the process of hiring a new veterinarian for Animal Services.
- Animal Services has created a quarterly newsletter. Ms. Bergman will forward to the Board after this meeting.
- Naloxone – There are two vending machines-one is located at Drumcastle on the first floor and at the other is at the Detention Center in the lobby. There will be two more to be located outside-one at Eastern Family Resource Center and the other at Liberty which will be weather proof. Health centers, libraries and Department of Social Services locations will have internal machines. Vending machines will expand to include, condoms, birth control information and pregnancy kits. There is no fee for these items.
- A Stroke Smart partner press event is being planned for May 15. The County Executive signed a proclamation which states Baltimore County is a Stroke Smart County. Magnets have been donated and approved by the County Council The press event will be at held Drumcastle, reminding all to know the signs and symptoms of a stroke.

Site Visits:

- MDH Audit – This audit covers a 3-year span. The transition from Advantage Financial to Workday has presented challenges with pulling reports. The state security breach has also presented challenges.
- Cancer Site Visit – We received the report. There are some minor items we need to follow up on, mostly documentation issues.

Personnel:

The Office of Operations invited staff to join in sharing gratitude for an employee who died unexpectedly.

- A long-term WIC employee passed away last weekend. Crisis Response has done a briefing with the staff in WIC as a result.
- The HHS Director/Health Officer position has been posted.
- Ms. Leister is to be appointed Interim Director and Health Officer by the County Council.

Trainings/Events:

- National Public Health Week – Ms. Leister visited all of the department sites during the week.

- Take Your Child to Work Day which was on April 25 was a success. Ms. Leister met with the kids and spoke with them about public health. The kids were very engaging. They had the opportunity to tour the Mobile Unit. It was a very uplifting day.
- The department has been invited to participate in a table top exercise on water supply.

Facility Issues:

- Drumcastle was closed last Wednesday as a result of a plumbing issue. We are working to address remote challenges and need to look at how the public is notified.
- Chase Brexton opened a new center at the Security Square Center. Staff toured the center during an open house.
- Dr. Havrilak asked if the neighbors are still complaining about noise at Animal Services. There have not been any recent complaints. Animal Services has a dedicated social media staff person who promotes the animals non-stop for adoption/rescues. Posts are heart-warming.

V. OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Adelsberger raised a question about the new Center for Violence bill that will be managed by the Maryland Department of Health. The bill has been signed. Funding is under review. There is a Health Officer meeting next week, Ms. Leister expects this to be on the agenda. Dr. O'Dowd has organized a group to discuss youth violence.

VI. REMARKS OF THE CHAIRMAN

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for May 24.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: To adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Ms. Matthews
Second: Mr. Adelsberger
Decision: Unanimous Approval

Della J. Leister, RN